

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2439

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DEPT PASS SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: POFR EG US LE

SUBJ: LEBANON

REF: STATE 100421

1. MET WITH FAHMY NOON TODAY TO CONVEY YOUR MESSAGE TO SADAT AND HIM. HE READ IT WITH GREAT CARE AND OBVIOUSLY APPRECIATED IT CONTENTS. HE GAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT IT BE SENT IMMEDIATELY TO THE PRESIDENT IN ISMAILIA.

2. BY WAY OF SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT, FAHMY NOTED FRANGIE'S STATEMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT RESIGN AFTER THE ELECTION OF NEW PRESIDENT UNLESS ADEQUATE SECURITY CONDITIONS EXIST. FAHMY AGREED THAT THIS IS SOMETHING BEST DEALT WITH AT THE TIME, BUT OBSERVED THAT FRANGIE'S EARLY DEPARTURE IS A SINE QUA NON TO ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEBANESE POLITICAL SITUATION. HE HOPES WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS TO LEAVE OFFICE WITHOUT DELAY ONCE A NEW PRESIDENT IS ELECTED.

3. FAHMY SUGGESTED WE SHOULD CONSULT ON WHO IS BEST QUALIFIED TO SUCCEED FRANGUE, HE CONTENDED THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE A MAN WHO HAS "NO PERSONALITY" OR IS ALREADY IDENTIFIED WITH ONE GROUP OR ANOTHER. IT SHOULD NOT, IN HIS VIEW, BE SARKIS, WHO IS TOO CLOSELY

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IDENTIFIED WITH THE SYRIANS. IT SHOULD BE A PERSON

WHO AFTER SIX MONTHS OR A YEAR WILL BE ABLE TO LEAD LEBANON BACK TO TRUE INDEPENDENCE AND RECONCILIATION. FAHMY AGAIN INDICATED THE EGYPTIAN PREFERENCE OF RAYMOND EDDE, BUT CLAIMED HE IS NOT WEDDED TO THE IDEA. IT COULD BE SOMEONE ELSE WHO MEETS THE QUALIFICATIONS. I TOLD FAHMY OUR VIEW THAT FRANGIE'S SUCCESSOR IS SOMETHING FOR THE LEBANESE TO DECIDE. HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE, BUT STILL THOUGHT WE SHOULD COMPARE NOTES ON THE POTENTIAL CANDIDATES.

4. FAHMY EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT WE MAY BE LEAVING THE MATTER OF SECURITY FORCES TOO MUCH IN THE AIR. HE FIRST NOTED THAT CONCEPT OF FRENCH FORCES IS NOT HIS, BUT TRACES BACK TO THE FRENCH THEMSELVES. HE HAS NO OBJECTION TO IT, BUT HAS WONDERED SINCE WE LAST TALKED ABOUT WHETHER THE FRENCH AND SYRIANS COULD REALLY COOPERATE.

5. THINKING OUT LOUD, FAHMY OPINED THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE ONLY ONE PARTY IN THE SECURITY FORCES--- NEITHER SYRIANS, EGYPTIANS, FRENCH, US OR ANYONE ELSE. MORE THAN ONE FOREIGN ELEMENT (ARAB INCLUDED) IS NEEDED FOR ANY SECURITY FORCE TO SUCCEED. ONLY IF THE LEBANESE KNOW THERE IS MORE THAN ONE FOREIGN ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY FORCES, FAHMY BELIEVES, WILL THEY SERIOUSLY TRY TO REGAIN A TRUE LEBANESE PERSONALITY. THEY NEED A "NEUTRAL" ATMOSPHERE IN ORDER TO DO THIS. HE DESCRIBED THIS AS A "MUST". SO FAR AS GOE IS CONCERNED, IT DOES NOT WANT THE FINAL RESOLUTION TO BE TITLTED TOWARD EGYPT OR TOWARD SYRIA OR TOWARD ANYONE ELSE. HE AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A "NEUTRAL" RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

6. APART FROM THE ABOVE, FAHMY HAD NOTHING ELSE TO SAY ON LEBANON. HE INDICATED HE WISHED TO THINK ABOUT THE MATTER FURTHER AND TRY TO OBTAIN SADAT'S LATEST THINKING. IF HE HAS ANY FURTHER IDEAS, HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH US. IN THE MEANTIME, HE REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE DETAILED MESSAGE AND HIS HOPE THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP SADAT AND HIM INFORMED OF ANY DEVELOPMENTS.

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